UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

Sunday, May 19, 2024

The Pending Strike



Los Angeles Times

Chaos reigns as UC strike extends into its third week

Riverside rocked by homicides and abduction in catfishing case

Pandemic's toll on older Latinos robs community

Fights for local school boards not over

For Iranians, soccer team stirs a swirl of emotions

From 2022.

Blog readers will likely know that UAW 4811 - which represents a variety of UC student-workers and researchers - has called what it terms an "unfair labor practice strike" starting Monday. The strike revolves around recent campus events concerning the encampments. Unlike the big 2022 strike - see the image - this one apparently will be on a rotating basis starting at Santa Cruz. In federal law - which in many ways served as a model for the state statute covering UC and CSU - a ULP strike is differentiated from an "economic strike," the latter being a strike over wages, hours, and working conditions, typically when a new contract is being negotiated and no existing contract is in place. A ULP strike - because it is seen as defending legal rights under the relevant statute - gives individual workers protection from being permanently replaced.

But as is often the case in law, there is a catch. The ultimate judge as to whether a given strike is a ULP strike or something else rests with the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB). So, whether the ULP strike protections apply is typically determined *after* the strike has begun. Adjudication of such matters can take time. Thus, the union and its members in a proclaimed ULP strike are taking a risk. PERB might not agree.

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- FAQs for Senate Faculty about Possible Strike by UAW May 2024
- CUCFA Statement On Campus Protests
- We Support BOARS Math Requirements Recommendation
- Support AB-2349 – The Cal-Bridge Program
- Drop the Charges Against January Regents' Meeting Protestors

Remaking the University

- The Authoritarian Personality Comes to College - 5/2/2024
- The New McCarthyism Intensifies - 4/30/2024
- THE STRIKE - 12/6/2022

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If PERB ruled that the rotating work stoppage was not a ULP strike, the union would then likely face liability for violating the no-strike clause in its current contracts with UC.* Such clauses typically specify that disagreements over the meaning of the contract during the duration of the contract are to be settled using a specified grievance-and-arbitration process.** No-strike clauses are generally seen as important to maintenance of good labor relations from the management viewpoint.

We usually think of a grievance as a situation in which a worker has been subject to discipline (including perhaps termination), and complains through a specified process. In union situations, the union takes the case on behalf of the worker through a series of steps with management officials. If the matter cannot be resolved, it goes to a neutral arbitrator for a binding decision. The arbitrator holds a hearing somewhat similar to a court, but with less formality. The union's case in such situations rests on a clause in the contract which will usually require that discipline will only be undertaken "for cause." Essentially, such clauses are interpreted by arbitrators as requiring due process. Arbitrators over many years have developed guidelines concerning what that means in the context of a workplace. But the important point is that what the union is alleging in a typical individual grievance is that the contract is being violated by improper discipline, i.e., the discipline was not for cause.

Contract violations are not confined, however, to individual discipline situations and can refer to *any* contract violation.

There is also a concept in labor law regarding the "scope of bargaining." Typically, anything that falls under "wages, hours, and working conditions" is within the scope of bargaining. Unions can press for such matters to the point of impasse and can strike over them (when there is no bar due to a no-strike clause). Issues that fall under the category of wages, hours, and working conditions are deemed mandatory items of bargaining and both sides must negotiate in good faith about them. Unions can "discuss" other non-mandatory matters with management, but not to the point of impasse and strike. Again, it is left to PERB to determine what is mandatory and what is not, and what good faith means - and it can take time for the legal process to play out.

If there is a bottom line to this quick course in labor relations, it is that labor law and practice involves many ambiguities such as the meaning of "working conditions," discipline "for cause," and "good faith," that adjudicating such matters can take time, and that "trust" in a labor-management relationship can be as important as the legal niceties. There is more to be said, but enough for now.

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*At Harvard, the local union is testing this issue by filing a complaint with the NLRB (the relevant authority for the private sector) rather than striking. It thus will get a ruling without the risks entailed in testing the issue by striking. See https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2024/5/17/hgsu-encampment-unfair-labor-practices/. UAW 4811 at UC filed a ULP charge with PERB on May 10, prior to the planned strike:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N1Luo2YQrWjD9qrN6B1aR1rlR2imRzjt/view.

Search

UC Faculty Associations

- UCLA Faculty Association
- UCSB Faculty Association
- UCSC Faculty Association
- UCB Faculty Association
- Council of UC Faculty Associations

Other Faculty Organizations

- American Association of University Professors
- California Faculty Association (NEA)
- UC-AFT

Topics

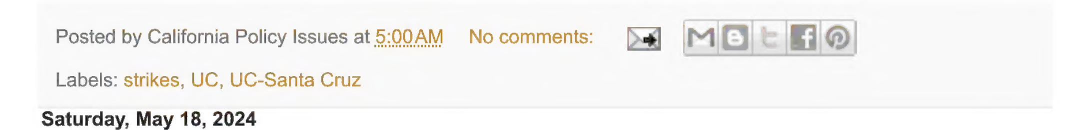
UC (1822) politics (1723) UC Regents (1709) health care (1281) State Budget (1191) governor (1046) UC budget crisis (909) UC-Berkeley (828) pension (639) diversity (620) pensions (588) tuition (518) admissions (485) athletics (439) CSU (377) transportation (363) UC-Davis (352) online education (333) ucrp (293) audio (287) UCOP (282) new hotel-conference center (281) UC enrollment (267) uc retirement (265) traffic (259) enrollment (239) UC-San Diego (227) community colleges (221) LAO (201) UC-Irvine (171) fund raising (154) UC-Santa Barbara (138) UC-Santa Cruz (133) ballot



UC filed a countercharge with PERB on May 17: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-files-unfair-labor-practice-charge-against-uaw-illegal-strike.

**UC published a copy of the no-strike clause from one of its UAW contracts at:

https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/wp-content/uploads/labor/bargaining-units/ra/docs/ra_2019-2022_15_no-strikes.pdf.

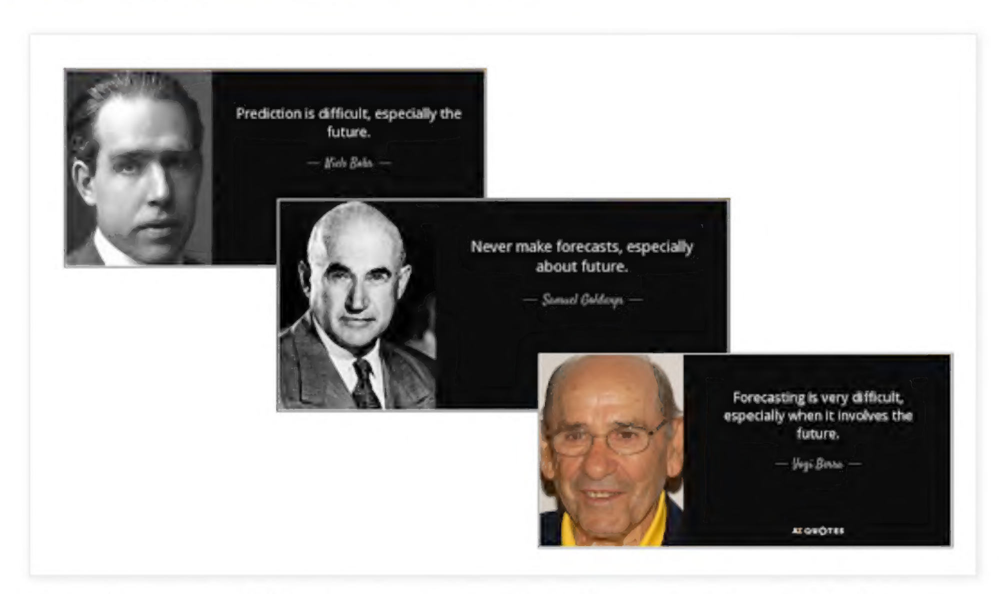


Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: strikes, UC, UC-Santa Cruz

Saturday, May 18, 2024

Well, someone must have said it...



...But whoever said it, the quote reminded yours truly of this item from the LA Times of April 26:

At USC, arrests. At UCLA, hands off. Why pro-Palestinian protests have not blown up on UC campuses

April 26, 2024



Perhaps there is some lesson here about why - in the end - the two votes of condemnation of Chancellor Block did not pass.



Posted by California Policy Issues at 11:29 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Circumventing the Regents - Part 4



As blog readers will know, a bill was introduced in the legislature that would compel UC to make undocumented student eligible for university employment. The Regents were seemingly moving to that objective when they received strong legal warnings about the perils of testing federal immigration law in that way. There is a theory that if UC was compelled to offer jobs to undocumented students by state law, it would be shielded from penalty. That is the thrust of AB 2586.

There is now another approach, a bill - ACA 20 - that would create a constitutional amendment that would have to go before voters, that would have the same objective, i.e., compelling UC, presumably on the basis that the compulsion would provide legal protection.

Both bills are at an early stage. They have't been heard in committee, let alone enacted by both houses. We will see. CalMatters has more about these approaches:

https://calmatters.org/education/higher-education/2024/05/undocumented-students-work/.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: diversity, legislature, politics, UC, UC Regents

The Two Legislative Assembly Resolutions Condemning Block Did Not Pass

From the Academic Senate:

Resolution of No Confidence in Chancellor Block: "Whereas, Chancellor Block failed to ensure the safety of our students and grievously mishandled the events of last week. Resolved, that we make a motion of no confidence in Chancellor Block." The Legislative Assembly voted 79 Approve, 103 Oppose, 5 Abstain, and 7 were present but did not vote. This resolution required a

Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association



majority of votes cast to be approved. [AIPSC (2nd ed.) 5.1] As 43% of votes cast were in favor, the Legislative Assembly did not approve the resolution.

Resolution to Censure Chancellor Block: "Whereas, Chancellor Block failed to ensure the safety of our students and grievously mishandled the events of last week. Resolved, that we make a motion to censure Chancellor Block." The Legislative Assembly voted 88 Approve, 88 Oppose, 3 Abstain, and 15 were present but did not vote. This resolution required a majority of votes cast to be approved. [AIPSC (2nd ed.) 5.1] As 50% of votes cast were in favor, the Legislative Assembly did not approve the resolution.

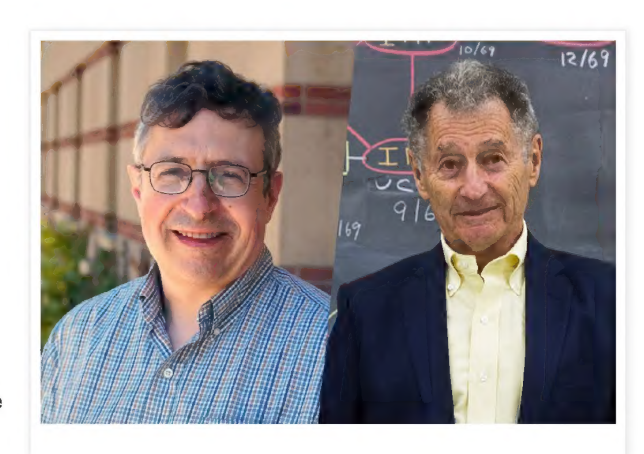
Source: https://view.bp.e.ucla.edu/?qs=b2e0ad1e9614583d2e2321dac1f4f6eb49f6057faa5b838d94510361586f58afba4428af92ebef0455112e0193d30de77665a4c7ee5756f4ffd32353b2650700a4fe3ce62bbf9f9a31db013a558f9136

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:15 AM No comments:  

Labels: UCLA

Friday, May 17, 2024

Profs. Zvi Bern & Leonard Kleinrock Elected to the National Academy of Sciences



From the UCLA Newsroom: Zvi Bern, a theoretical physicist, and Leonard Kleinrock, one of the early pioneers of the internet, have been elected to the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of their distinguished and continuing achievements in original research.

The two professors are among 120 new members and 34 international members recently announced by the academy. Membership is one of the

highest honors a scientist in the United States can receive.

Bern and Kleinrock

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Zvi Bern

Professor of physics and astronomy, UCLA College

Bern, a faculty member since 1992 and director of UCLA's Mani L. Bhaumik Institute for Theoretical Physics, is internationally known for his theoretical work in elemntary particle physics. Using advanced theoretical methods to carry out complex computations, Bern is developing improved ways for physicists to understand how elementary particles scatter off each other, paticularly under extreme conditions, and has applied those ideas to physics at the Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland, to maximally supersymmetric gauge and gravity theories, and to gravitational wave physics.

A fellow of the American Physical Society, Bern, along with David Kosower and Lance Dixon, was awarded the J. J. Sakurai Prize for Theoretical Particle Physics in 2014. In 2023, the same trio won the Galileo Galilei Medal from the Galileo Galilei Institute for Theoretical Physics.

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Leonard Kleinrock

Distinguished professor emeritus of computer science, UCLA Samueli School of Engineering

In 1962, as a graduate student at MIT, Kleinrock developed the mathematical theory of packet switching — a foundational technology of the internet that allows computers to exchange information across a network. A year later, he joined UCLA, where he continued to refine and test this process. On Oct. 29, 1969, Kleinrock's team directed the successful transmission of the first message over the Arpanet from a computer in UCLA's Boelter Hall to another computer at the Stanford Research Institute — a seminal moment that has been recognized as the birth of the internet.

Kleinrock continues to teach courses at UCLA Samueli and currently heads the UCLA Connection Lab, where he directs scholarly work and advises graduate students on computer networks and related topics like inclusive connectivity. In 2016, he created the Internet Research Initiative at UCLA, which supports undergraduate students in independent research.

Kleinrock is also a recipient of the National Medal of Science, the nation's highest award for scientific achievement, and a member of the National Academy of Engineering, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Inventors. He is an inaugural member of the Internet Hall of Fame.

With this year's newly elected members, the academy now has 2,617 active members and 537 international members.

===

The National Academy of Sciences was established in 1863 by a congressional act of incorporation signed by Abraham Lincoln. One of three national academies, along with National Academy of Engineering and the National Academy of Medicine, it provides independent, objective advice to the federal government on matters related to science and technology.

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Source: https://newsroom.ucla.edu/releases/2-ucla-faculty-members-elected-to-national-academy-of-sciences.

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Kleinrock on the birth of the Internet:



Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9L4ljpSPUo.

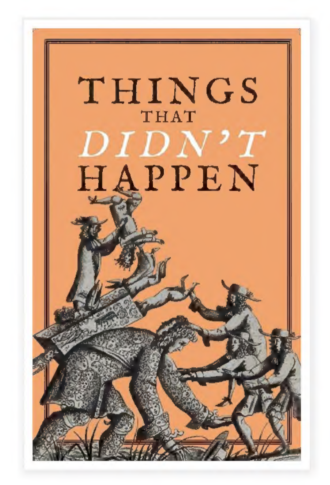
Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:11 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

What Didn't Happen at the Regents

One of the more controversial issues that was due to be taken up at the Regents was the question of departmental political statements. It was scheduled for yesterday's meeting. But at some point, it was taken off the agenda. An explanation was given in the Daily Bruin article below for the change in schedule. Yours truly suspects it was deferred because it was seen as

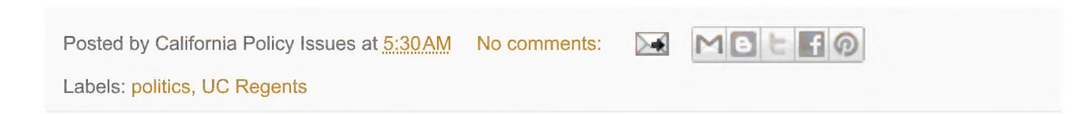
likely to be the source of further protests. Deferring it to the next meeting puts it in July. Just a surmise.



From the Bruin: *The UC Board of Regents Academic and Student Affairs Committee deferred a proposal to limit University faculty from making political statements on departmental website homepages. The Regents previously delayed a vote on the proposal – Item J1 – in March to Thursday.*

The proposal was deferred because there was judged to be insufficient time to discuss it Thursday. The regents had not yet finished their closed session discussions on campus safety by 12:30 p.m., when they were scheduled to have done so. The Daily Bruin understands there were also concerns that the regents would not have had a quorum to discuss the item. The proposal mandates that departmental homepage websites can only be used for information regarding University operations. Personal or collective opinions of members of the department would not be permitted on departmental homepages, but the proposal would not restrict faculty members from posting opinions on their individual faculty webpages or social media...

Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2024/05/16/uc-regents-tables-discussion-on-item-j1-to-future-meeting.



Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, UC Regents

Details, Details - Part 2

DETAILED EXPENDITURES BY STATE FUNDS

The following table presents proposed and revised state fund expenditure amounts for the budget year by General Fund, special funds, and selected bond funds.

Expenditures	January Proposed*	May Revision*	Change*	% Change
General Fund	$4,740,395	$4,716,801	$-23,594	-0.50%
Special Fund	$175,496	$96,017	$-79,479	-45.29%
Selected Bond Funds	$-	$-	$-	-
Totals, State Funds	**$4,915,891**	**$4,812,818**	**$-103,073**	**-2.10%**

* Dollars in thousands

We noted a few days back that the details of the governor's May Revise budget proposal for UC were not available. Some details have now been released on the Dept. of Finance website. There is a general fund cutback for UC proposed of $23.6 million and a special fund cut of

$79.5 million. The Regents were told that about half of that general fund cut on the website is for labor education programs. That particular cut is a bit odd since the heavily-Democratic legislature tends to like such labor programs. Really old timers will recall that back in the Schwarzenegger era, the governor kept trying to cut out the labor programs. But that was in the era when it was possible in California to elect a Republican governor.

Source: https://ebudget.ca.gov/budget/2024-25MR/#/Department/6440.

Although more details on what is involved for UC are not up on the Dept. of Finance website, CalMatters managed to get more information which can be summarized as the death of the UC compact with the governor. The CalMatters report seems at odds with what the Regents were told. The compact was already reeling in January when the promised 5% budget increase for this coming July 1 was cancelled and then promised for a year later. We pointed out at the time that the governor cannot actually make such promises since the legislature has to approve what is done, year by year. Now, even the original promise is gone, although no one quite said that to the Regents. (We will separately cover the Regents item on the budget, but the Regents were given a more positive spin on what seems to be the proposal.) CalMatters reports a $125 million *cut* from the base, i.e., well more than what is shown above, on July 1, promised (there's that word again!) to be restored a year later plus 2%. See:

https://calmatters.org/education/higher-education/2024/05/california-budget/.

The Regents *were* given numbers that seem to square with the CalMatters version, albeit - as noted - with a different spin. But the fact that there is one thing on the official website and something else being given out separately suggests that the governor's budget people are still formulating what was presented as a finished proposal. The proposal seems instead to be a work in progress.

All this ambiguity will have to be worked through at the legislature and ultimately the budget will be enacted there. The governor has a line-item veto which hasn't been used much of late because deals have been made with the legislature.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, politics, State Budget, UC budget crisis

Thursday, May 16, 2024

Statement of UC President Drake on UC-Irvine

UC President Michael V. Drake, M.D., statement on free speech and campus protests at UC Irvine

May 16, 2024

UC President Michael V. Drake, M.D., issued the following statement today (Thursday, May 16, 2024):



The University of California has a long and proud history of supporting freedom of speech and First Amendment rights. We readily accept our obligation to protect the rights of our students, faculty, staff and visitors to our campuses. The right to protest and demonstrate against policies and practices of governing authorities is among the most important privileges of a democracy. This right is not, however, absolute. We must exercise our rights within the broad confines of the laws and policies we ourselves have established.

On Wednesday afternoon, several dozen protestors at UC Irvine illegally occupied and barricaded entrances and exits to an academic building. This led to the cancellation of classes for the remainder of the day and an advisory to exit all buildings in the vicinity of the protest due to safety concerns. Later that evening, UC Irvine Police, supported by several local public safety agencies, worked to safely clear the building. I support the campus and Chancellor Gillman in taking these steps to restore access to educational facilities for members of our campus community.

The University of California must be as flexible as it can be involving matters of free expression, including expression of viewpoints that some find deeply offensive. But when that expression blocks the ability of students to learn or to express their own viewpoints, when it meaningfully disrupts the functioning of the University, or when it threatens the safety of students, or anyone else, we must act.

There are countless ways to protest lawfully, and UC campuses will work with students, faculty and staff to make space available and do all we can to protect people's ability to hold these protests and demonstrations. But unlawful protests that violate the rights of our fellow citizens are unacceptable and cannot be tolerated.

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Source: https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/press-room/uc-president-michael-v-drake-md-statement-free-speech-and-campus-protests-uc-irvine.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 10:55 AM No comments: 

Labels: Drake, UC, UC-Irvine, UCOP

Statement of UC-Irvine Chancellor

May 15, 2024

Today's Challenging Campus Events



Dear Campus Community,

What a sad day for our university. I'm brokenhearted.

At 2 p.m. on Wednesday, we, along with most other UC campuses, received the latest "demands" from the protesters. The protesters orchestrated a swift departure from their encampment. In a coordinated fashion they moved out of the encampment to the Physical Sciences Lecture Hall, where a small group barricaded themselves in, supported by a large group of community members who had gathered for a scheduled rally.

For the last two weeks, I have consistently communicated that the encampment violated our policies but that the actions did not rise to the level requiring police intervention. My approach was consistent with the guidelines of UC's Robinson/Edley Report, which urges the UC to exhaust all possible alternatives before resorting to police intervention.

I was prepared to allow a peaceful encampment to exist on the campus without resorting to police intervention, even though the encampment violated our policies and the existence of the encampment was a matter of great distress to other members of our community. I communicated that if there were violations of our rules we would address them through the normal administrative policies of the university and not through police action.

And so after weeks when the encampers assured our community that they were committed to maintaining a peaceful and nondisruptive encampment, it was terrible to see that they would dramatically alter the situation in a way that was a direct assault on the rights of other students and the university mission.

The latest campus-specific and systemwide demands made by our encampers and their counterparts across the University of California attempted to dictate that anyone who disagreed with them must conform to their opinions. They asserted the right to oversee many elements of university operations involving the administration, faculty, students, and staff, bypassing customary campus protocols and ignoring the function of the Academic Senate.

Most importantly, their assault on the academic freedom rights of our faculty and the free speech rights of faculty and students was appalling. One can only imagine the response if people on the other side of these issues established an encampment to force me to censor all anti-Zionist academic and student programming.

But my concern now is not the unreasonableness of their demands. It is their decision to transform a manageable situation that did not have to involve police into a situation that

required a different response. I never wanted that. I devoted all of my energies to prevent this from happening.

I'm sorry this campus I love so much had to experience this terrible and avoidable situation. I remain steadfast in my commitment to protecting the rights of all members of our community to express whatever viewpoints they believe are essential for others to hear and engage. And I remain steadfast in my commitment to defend our faculty and students from efforts to prevent them from having the same rights of academic freedom and free speech as everyone else on this campus.

My hope is that we can find our way to a culture of peace, mutual respect, and shared commitment to addressing our differences through the norms of scholarly inquiry and debate.

Fiat Lux,

Chancellor Howard Gillman

Source: https://chancellor.uci.edu/communications/campus/2024/240515-campus-events.php.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 8:12 AM No comments:  

Labels: UC-Irvine

Watch the Morning Regents Meetings of May 15, 2024



The morning Regents' session of May 15 began with public comments, much of which called for divestment, amnesty for protesters, and related demands. There was also opposition to the Hawaiian telescope project, TMT. There were a couple of complaints about deficiencies in mentoring, but it was unclear from the comments exactly what the mentoring problem was. (There was a session in the afternoon that dealt with this topic.) Finally, there was a call for funding a substance abuse project.

Regent Leib's term as chair is ending and he expressed thank-yous to various people. President Drake noted a study was being undertaken of recent events at UCLA regarding the removal of the encampment. Faculty rep Steintrager talked about the concepts of safety, academic freedom, and the need for trust to have shared governance. He somehow related

these concepts to a performance art piece that consisted of being locked in a locker for five days. Yours truly didn't quite see the connection, but he may be insufficiently erudite. Then again, it didn't seem as though the Regents understood it, either.

Chancellor Muñoz of Merced made a presentation concerning the development of his campus. Finally, the Governance Committee dealt with an executive appointment and pay for a PR position.

As always, we preserve Regents meetings indefinitely because the Regents have no policy in place concerning preservation.

The general website for the May 15th morning session can be found at:

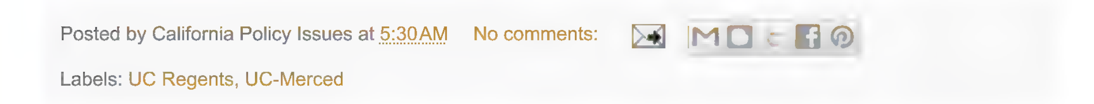
https://archive.org/details/regents-5-15-2024-am-board-compliance-and-audit-committee.

There is a link to the Board and Compliance and Audit meetings at:

https://ia902208.us.archive.org/25/items/regents-5-15-2024-am-board-compliance-and-audit-committee/Regents-5-15-2024%20AM%20Board%2C%20Compliance%20and%20Audit%20Committee.mp4.

The short meeting of Governance is at:

https://ia802208.us.archive.org/25/items/regents-5-15-2024-am-board-compliance-and-audit-committee/Regents-5-15-2024%20AM%20Governance%20Committee.mp4.



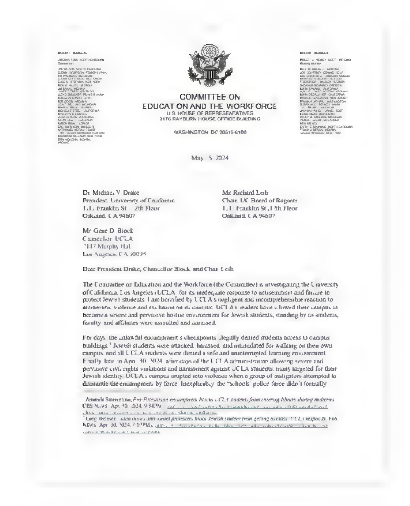
UCLA Receives Lengthy Congressional Request for Documents

A request for documentation regarding antisemitism has been made by U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce dated May 15, 2024, addressed to University of California President Michael Drake, UCLA Chancellor Gene Block, and Chair of the UC Regents Richard Leib. Chancellor Block is due to testify before the Committee later this month.

The full request runs ten pages. You can read or download it at:

https://archive.org/details/ucla_final-congress.





COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2176 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

May 5, 2024

Dr. Michael V. Drake
President, University of California
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

Mr. Richard Leib
Chair, UC Board of Regents
1111 Franklin St., 12th Floor
Oakland, CA 94607

Mr. Gene D. Block
Chancellor, UCLA
2147 Murphy Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90095

Dear President Drake, Chancellor Block, and Chair Leib:

The Committee on Education and the Workforce (the Committee) is investigating the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) for its inadequate response to antisemitism and failure to protect Jewish students. I am horrified by UCLA's negligent and incomprehensible reaction to antisemitic violence and exclusion on its campus. UCLA's leaders have allowed their campus to become a severe and pervasive hostile environment for Jewish students, standing by as students, faculty, and affiliates were assaulted and harassed.

For days, the unlawful encampment's checkpoints illegally denied students access to campus buildings.[1] Jewish students were attacked, harassed, and intimidated for walking on their own campus, and all UCLA students were denied a safe and uninterrupted learning environment.[2] Finally, late on April 30, 2024, after days of the UCLA administration allowing severe and pervasive civil rights violations and harassment against UCLA students, many targeted for their Jewish identity, UCLA's campus erupted into violence when a group of instigators attempted to dismantle the encampment by force. Inexplicably, the "schools" police force didn't formally

[1] Amanda Sorrentino, *Pro-Palestinian encampment blocks UCLA students from entering library during midterms*, CBS NEWS, Apr. 30, 2024, 9:34PM

[2] Greg Wehner, *Video shows anti-Israel protesters block Jewish student from getting to class; UCLA responds*, FOX NEWS, Apr. 30, 2024, 7:07PM

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:15 AM No comments:  

Watch the Regents Meeting of May 14, 2024



The Regents met at UC-Merced on Tuesday, May 14, beginning a three-day regular session. The Tuesday meeting featured public comments, a session of the Investments Committee, and another on the Special Committee on Athletics.

Public comments focused on calls for divestment, complaints that President Drake's money for "neutral" programming had been used at Davis for indoctrination, complaints about low pay for childcare workers, and a complaint that the definition of nonresident for tuition purposes was inconsistent.

Apart from the usual review of investment returns, there was a lengthy session about the divestment issue at the Investments Committee during the presentation by the Chief Investment Office Jagdeep Bachhar. Early on, he stressed that the Regents and his office had legal fiduciary responsibilities to the pension, endowment, and other funds managed by his office. He noted that IT companies such as Google (which the divesters don't like) produced some of the highest long term returns.

He was pushed on the issue of how come UC divested from fossil fuels. His story, which is somewhat of a stretch, was that fossil fuel companies had "stranded assets" and therefore they had come to be seen as bad long term risks. That;s why he divested and not just because of social and environmental issues. When asked if he would have divested from fossil fuels if there had not been such risks, he said he would not, again stressing fiduciary obligations. But, at another point in the meeting, he said that he would divest if the Regents told him to since they are his bosses.

UC has an ESG (environment, social governance) policy in which issues falling into that category are raised with companies in which UC is a significant stockholder through a process of "engagement" and sometimes through votes at shareholder meetings. BMW was given as an example in which such engagement had occurred because it was perceived as moving too slowly toward electric cars.

One Regent - Makarechian - noted that you really can't divest from fossil fuels since such fuels are directly or indirectly in almost everything. Bachhar agreed.

When the student regent Tesfai raised the question of student demands, Bachhar broke down the portfolio as follows. (Note that much investment is through index funds rather than direct holding by UC.)

$3.3 billion in companies that could be classified as weapons manufacturers.

$12 billion supporting the current war - since that is the U.S. government, he counted just the $12 billion in US Treasury securities in the portfolio.

$163 million (not billion) in Blackrock

Blackrock invests on behalf of UC $2.1 billion, i.e., they are UC's agent.

Blackstone (not to be confused with Blackrock): $8.6 billion.

Companies that do business with Israel: $3.2 billion

He somehow added this up to $32 billion out of about $175 billion in assets held by UC. (Yours truly gets a somewhat lesser amount but maybe he missed something.) So, to divest all of that would chop 18% out of the portfolio.

Regent Hernandez said maybe - given the uncertainty of the world and US political situation - UC should pause any additional investments in weapons manufacturers. Bachhar pushed back saying there is always an uncertain situation. Hernandez said he was a UC pensioner and wouldn't mind divesting from weapons. Bachhar said he (Hernandez) was just one of over 300,000 and again focused on fiduciary obligations.

An interesting fact was pointed out: UC did divest from tobacco and fossil fuels for the pension and endowment. But for the voluntary savings plans, employees have to choose a fund that doesn't have tobacco and fossil fuels. UC doesn't take away the option of a complete fund that includes tobacco and fossil fuel. Those savers that have so chosen account for only $32 Million



(not billion) out of $38 Billion (not million). (It might be further noted, although it wasn't raised at the meeting, that voluntary participants in the saving plan can take their funds out of UC and invest with Fidelity. They can then invest in, and divest from, anything Fidelity offers as individual investors.)

It should be noted that in the traditional finance view, divesting mainly hurts the divester by making the portfolio more volatile. If UC sells share in company X, someone else buys them at the market price and company X is largely unaffected. In a prior post, we noted that Bachhar's predecessor had a jaundiced view of divestment for that reason.*

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*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/05/ten-years-ago-remarks-of-retired-uc.html.

===

The Special Committee on Athletics met following the Investments Committee with the headline item being a $10 million tax on UCLA to be transferred to Berkeley due to UCLA's decision to change athletic conferences. The $10 million number originated in a prior meeting of the Committee where a range of $2 million to $10 was approved, subject to further financial review. There was a closed-door meeting ahead of the open session this time and occasional references were made in open session about the grave financial impact that had been revealed. So, the recommendation of $10 million came about only because it was at the top of the earlier range. Originally, the proposal was for $10 million per year for 5 years. But it was cut to 3 years due to the new undisclosed findings and the rapidly changing college athletics situation. The alumni regent voted against the transfer. The student regent (from UCLA) went along reluctantly. It was noted that it was USC that made the first move and that if UCLA hadn't followed, some other team would have, thus producing much the same outcome.

The Committee then heard presentations by UC-Merced on its athletics program and by a group of student-athletes from various campuses.

Finally, there was discussion of general trends in college athletics with references to the development of NIL payments and transfer portals, eroding the old idea of student-athletes as amateurs. State legislatures have been intervening and there is litigation occurring. Perhaps most revealing was the use of the word "industry" by presenters when describing college athletics. As in earlier parts of the meeting, there was reference to developments that had been discussed in closed session.

As always, we preserve the recordings of Regents meetings indefinitely since the Regents have no set policy on retention. The general web address for the May 14th meeting is:

https://archive.org/details/regents-5-14-2024-investments-committee.

For Public Comments and the Investments Committee:

https://ia600400.us.archive.org/2/items/regents-5-14-2024-investments-committee/Regents%205-14-2024Investments%20Committee.mp4.



For the Special Committee on Athletics:

https://ia600400.us.archive.org/2/items/regents-5-14-2024-investments-committee/Regents%205-14-2024%20Special%20Committee%20on%20Athletics.mp4.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: UC Regents

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

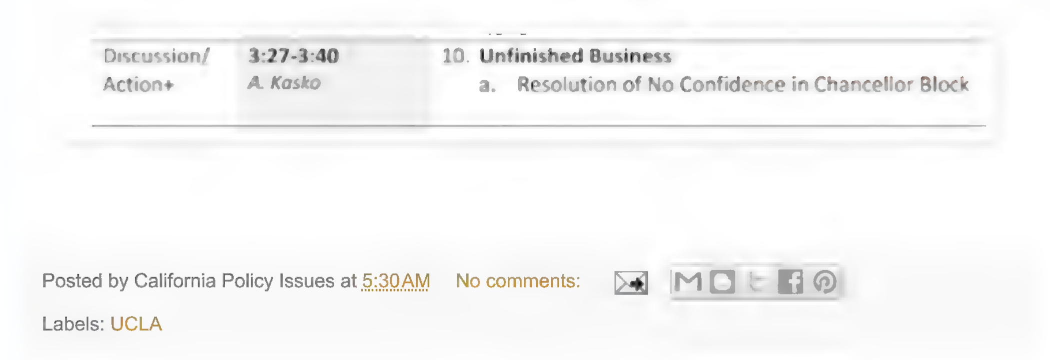
13 Minutes



Last week's special meeting of the Legislative Assembly with its two resolutions condemning Chancellor Block attracted a big Zoom audience and many speakers. It featured several votes - all of which took substantial time. And it finally ended inconclusively with the topic put over to this week's regular meeting.

When you look at the agenda for the upcoming meeting which is scheduled from 2 pm to 4 pm tomorrow, it sets aside the time of 3:27 until 3:40 for the condemnation topic. Yours truly has checked and rechecked the math and determined that a total of 13 minutes has been allocated.

Just saying...



Discussion/ Action+	**3:27-3:40** *A. Kasko*	10. **Unfinished Business** a. Resolution of No Confidence in Chancellor Block

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Whodunit? Maybe it was Igor! - Part 3

We continue to note that while the local police with their much-touted high-tech sleuthing have yet to identify the bat-wielding guys of the night of April 30-May 1, news accounts continue to reveal names. From the Guardian:

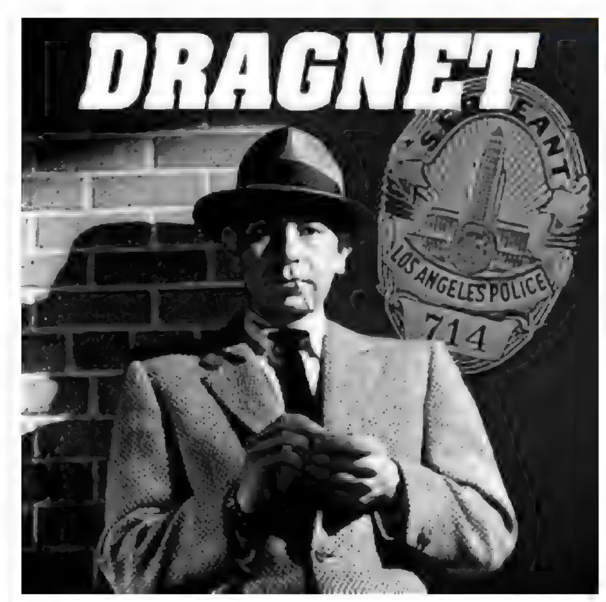


...Manuk Grigorian, one of the organizers of some of the southern California "Leave Our Kids Alone" protests, was also present at the counter-protests at UCLA on 30 April. Grigorian frequently appeared on Fox News to discuss the school board demonstrations last summer, where he leveled false claims that certain public education districts were "grooming" children to develop LGBTQ+ identities...



Full story at https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/article/2024/may/10/college-campus-protests-far-right.

So where is Sargeant Friday when we need him?



Younger blog readers can Google it.

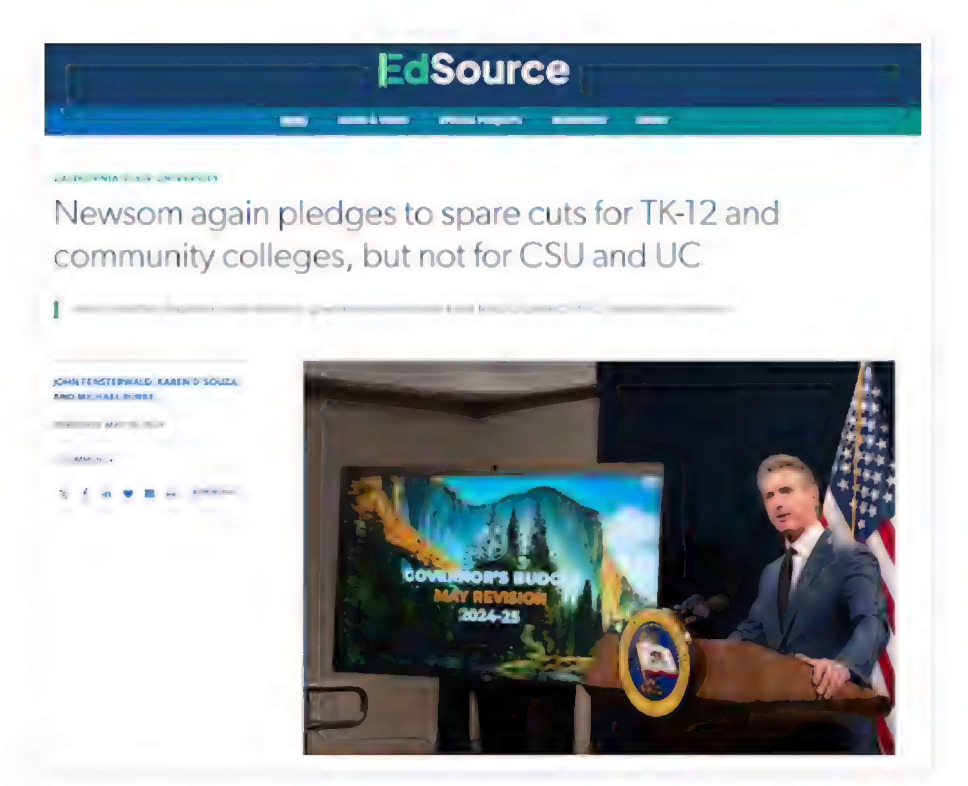
Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Tuesday, May 14, 2024

The headline pretty much tells the tale...

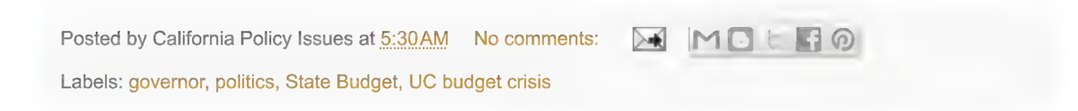




...but if you want more information:

https://edsource.org/2024/newsom-again-pledges-to-spare-cuts-for-schools-and-community-colleges-but-not-for-csu-and-uc/711722.

Note that K-14 gets special protections thanks to Prop 98. UC is among the least protected items in the state budget.


Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: governor, politics, State Budget, UC budget crisis

Update on Monday's Parking Structure Disturbances



The Daily Bruin tweeted the information above. Apparently, Bruin tweets have supplanted Bruin Alerts. Yours truly is aware of a meeting in Murphy Hall for later this week being cancelled along with a dinner meeting at the Faculty Club due to expectations of further disturbances, possibly near Murphy.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:15 AM No comments:

Labels: parking, transportation, UCLA

Whodunit? Maybe it was Igor! - Part 2

Faithful blog readers will recall our post of May 8th concerning the hype in the LA Times surrounding LAPD's high tech search for the identity of the guys with the bats who came on campus the night of April 30-May 1. But if you aren't a completely faithful reader, you can go to:



https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/05/whodunit-maybe-it-was-igor.html

for a refresher. In any case, the NY Times seems to have scooped both the LA Times and the LAPD. The NY Times not only has found two individuals, it has also named them and interviewed them!

Maybe the LAPD needs to purchase a subscription to the NY Times as part of its pursuit of the culprits. Just a thought...



...One of the counterprotesters, Liel Asherian, was seen on video footage kicking at the encampment's plywood barrier, pulling boards to the ground and slamming a tennis racket against the wood that remained. He said he had gone that night to see the encampment on his own, though he later acknowledged that a friend of his was also pictured at the scene. In an interview, he said he was not part of any group and had not intended to participate in a conflict.

Mr. Asherian said he had approached the pro-Palestinian encampment to ask some people why they were protesting. He said he believed Jewish people such as himself and Palestinians were like cousins, and he expressed alarm at the innocent Palestinians being killed in Israel's military campaign. But he said he disliked the disruptive tactics the pro-Palestinian protesters were using at U.C.L.A.

He said things devolved when someone called him a "dirty Jew" and he was doused in pepper spray. "That made me start breaking down their barricades," he said.

Also among the counterprotesters that night was Narek Palyan, an activist known for making frequent antisemitic statements, as well as comments critical of gay and transgender people. He said he went alone and was motivated to show up in part because he had seen a video of a Jewish woman on the pro-Palestinian side criticizing white people. "I wanted to go find her, specifically," he said, adding that he was not able to.

Mr. Palyan said he did not necessarily support either side in the protest or the war. He said he spent much of the night asking people questions about their positions and trying to keep people from fighting by throwing makeshift weapons into nearby bushes. Mr. Palyan, who is Armenian American, also said he had warned two younger Armenian boys to stay out of the melee.

"I told them, 'This isn't ours,'" he said...

Full story at https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/12/us/ucla-counterprotesters-police-response.html.

The same NY Times story indicates that Gov. Newsom heard about the (televised) violence at UCLA with no local police intervention and eventually called in the CHP after - despite assurances from campus authorities - no local police were showing up.

If 80% of success is just showing up, 100% of failure is not showing up.

Although the LA Times did not locate anyone involved in the violence, it did publish an article noting that social media contained posts such as the one below (specifically referenced in the article) suggesting an out-of-control situation was prevailing at UCLA without intervention by campus authorities:





Or direct to https://ia600307.us.archive.org/9/items/newsom-4-3-24-snow-survey/Parent%20to%20UCPD%20posted%204-29-24.mp4. Posted on Instagram and other sites April 29th, e.g. https://www.instagram.com/reel/C6XzVi5rVVk/.

The LA Times report is at:

https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2024-05-10/how-social-media-rumors-sparked-a-night-of-mayhem-at-ucla.

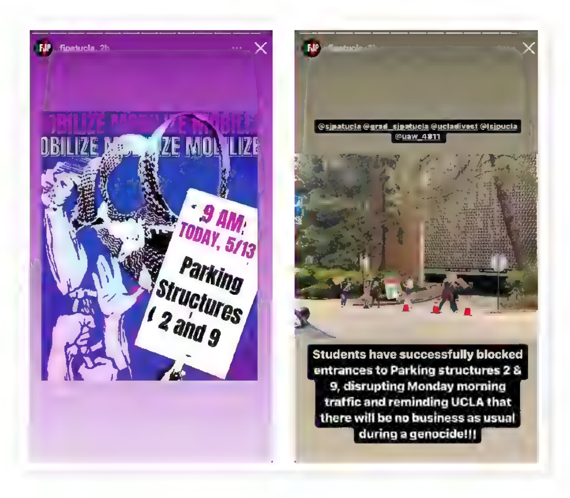
Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: UCLA

Monday, May 13, 2024

Reported disturbances around two UCLA parking structures



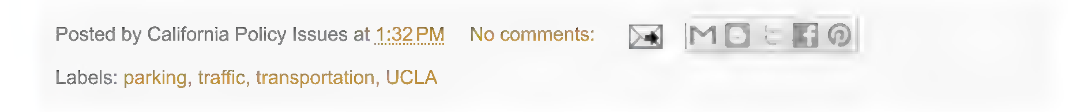


There are reports today on social media of disturbances around two campus parking structures. The image on the left calls for such disturbances. And there is a claim in the image on the right that is has occurred from the same source. At least one tweet from another source indicates it is occurring:

https://twitter.com/social_brains/status/1790073683555283082.

No further reports are available.

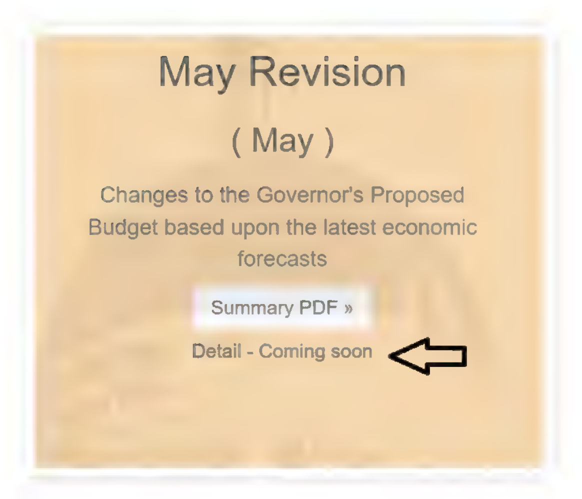
https://bso.ucla.edu/ reports normal activities but it might be advisable to avoid structures 2 and 9.



Posted by California Policy Issues at 1:32 PM No comments:

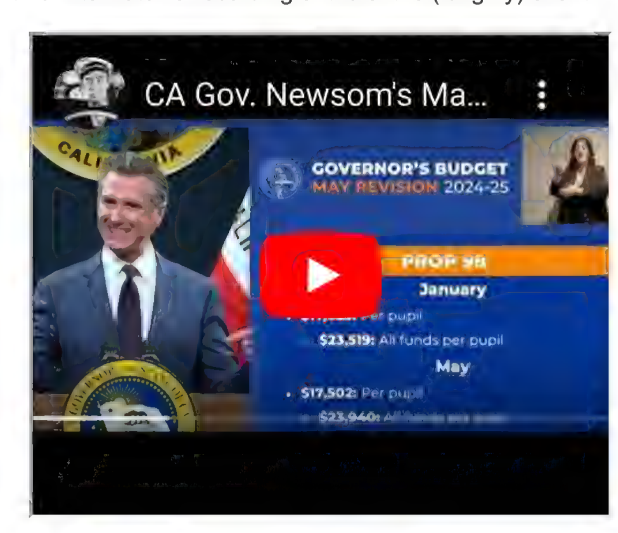
Labels: parking, traffic, transportation, UCLA

Details, Details



The Department of Finance website provides a link to the official summary of the governor's May Revise budget proposal of last Friday. But the details are said to be "coming soon." It's in those details that we might find out whether there have been changes with regard to UC's budget. There was no mention of the budget for UC at the governor's news conference. You can see the full news conference at https://ia600307.us.archive.org/9/items/newsom-4-3-24-snow-survey/newsom%205-10-24%20May%20revise.mp4.

While we wait for the details, we do have a condensation of the governor's presentation below for those who don't want to watch a recording of the entire (lengthy) event.



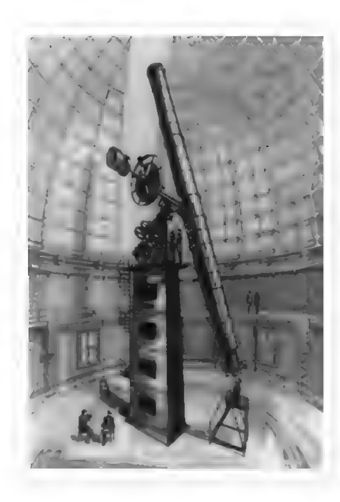
Or direct to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5q5o66yJRo.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:30 AM No comments: 

Labels: State Budget, UC budget crisis



TMT at the Regents this week



The Hawaiian Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) is likely to come up at the Regents during their May meeting next week since there is a segment explicitly focusing on astronomy. As blog readers will know, TMT has been a hot political issue in Hawaii. UC is part of the coalition involving construction of the TMT. From the LA Times:

More than 100 years ago, astronomer George Ellery Hale brought our two Pasadena institutions together to build what was then the largest optical telescope in the world. The Mt. Wilson Observatory changed the conception of humankind's place in the universe and revealed the mysteries of the heavens to generations of citizens and scientists alike. Ever since then, the United States has been at the forefront of "big glass." ...

In 2021, the National Academy of Sciences released Astro2020. This report, a road map of national priorities, recommended funding the $2.5-billion Giant Magellan Telescope at the peak of Cerro Las Campanas in Chile and the $3.9-billion Thirty Meter Telescope at Mauna Kea in Hawaii. According to those plans, the telescopes would be up and running sometime in the 2030s.

NASA and the Department of Energy backed the plan. Still, the National Science Foundation's governing board on Feb. 27 said it should limit its contribution to $1.6 billion, enough to move ahead with just one telescope. The NSF intends to present their process for making a final decision in early May, when it will also ask for an update on nongovernmental funding for the two telescopes. The ultimate arbiter is Congress, which sets the agency's budget...

The goal is "all-sky" observation, a wide-angle view into deep space. Europe's Extremely Large Telescope won't have that capability. Besides boosting America's competitive edge in astronomy, the powerful dual telescopes, with full coverage of both hemispheres, would allow researchers to gain a better understanding of phenomena that come and go quickly, such as colliding black holes and the massive stellar explosions known as supernovas. They would put us on a path to explore Earth-like planets orbiting other suns and address the question: "Are we alone?"

Funding both the GMT and TMT is an investment in basic science research, the kind of fundamental work that typically has led to economic growth and innovation in our uniquely American ecosystem of scientists, investors and entrepreneurs... what could get lost in the shuffle are the kind of ambitious projects that have made America the scientific envy of the world, inspiring new generations of researchers and attracting the best minds in math and science to our colleges and universities.



Full story at https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2024-04-25/telescope-hawaii-chile-national-science-foundation-astronomy.

One suspects that this item from the LA Times was indirectly aimed at the Regents. Below is what the Regents have received for this week's meeting.

...The Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT) is a next-generation, ground-based telescope that is capable of transformative science, from the study of the origin of the universe to the search for other lifebearing Earths orbiting nearby stars. UC was a founding partner of the project, which now includes Caltech and the national science foundations of Canada, India, and Japan. The US National Academies 2020 Decadal Survey recommended a major federal government role in both of the two ELT [Extremely Large Telescopes] projects as its highest priority for the NSF. The other ELT project is the smaller Giant Magellan Telescope to be sited in the southern hemisphere, led by Carnegie, Harvard, the University of Arizona, and other partners. TMT has been formally proposed to the NSF, passed successfully through the NSF's preliminary design review, and received design development funding. Congressional appropriations language encourages the NSF to fund both ELT projects, while a National Science Board recommendation directs the NSF to select between them; the NSF is planning a review to assess the role, readiness, and capabilities of the projects over the next months.

Construction of TMT was halted in 2019 by large-scale protests by the people of Hawai'i who were unhappy with the impact of astronomy on Maunakea, a mountain that is sacred to many. Construction remains paused. TMT has been working to build partnerships in Hawai'i, listening to the concerns of the people, supporting education and workforce development, and developing programs to meaningfully meet the needs of the community. The NSF is also carrying out a environmental and cultural impact survey. The TMT International Observatory (TIO) Board is maintaining the project during NSF consideration and will likely require additional financial commitment from Members. In the near future, Regents may need to take an action to approve additional funding and resources towards the pre-construction and construction of the Project.

The University is seeking to obtain a significant portion of such additional funding from philanthropic sources. Approval of this additional funding commitment may be requested in advance of an upcoming TIO Member meeting at the end of May 2024...

Full report at https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/may24/a3.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: UC, UC Regents

Sunday, May 12, 2024

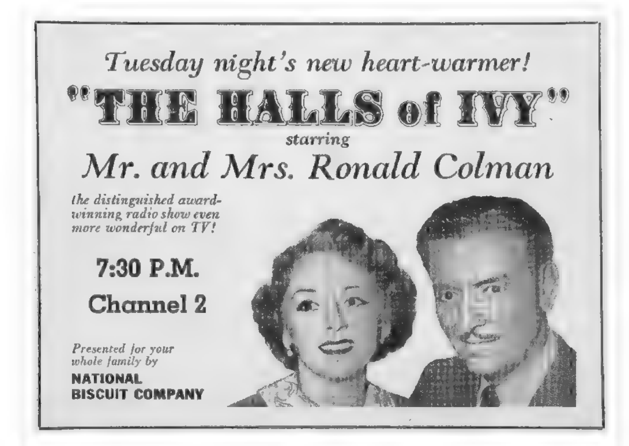
The whole world is watching

Last week's special emergency meeting at UCLA of the Legislative Assembly (Academic Senate) was officially confidential, although - as noted in a previous post - there were leaks. As



blog readers will know, the session ended inconclusively and will be continued at the next regular meeting.

It is worthwhile reminding ourselves that we do not live in a bubble. There are what economists call "externalities" - in this case political externalities.



Back in the day - but not today

*There is the chant - "**The Whole World Is Watching**" - that is today associated with the demonstration outside the 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago. The world was watching then, It is now:*

A Failure of Leadership at American Universities
May 11, 2024
By The Editorial Board, NY Times
https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/11/opinion/campus-protests.html

Protesting the world's wrongs has been a rite of passage for generations of American youth, buoyed by our strong laws protecting free speech and free assembly. Yet the students and other demonstrators disrupting college campuses this spring are being taught the wrong lesson — for as admirable as it can be to stand up for your beliefs, there are no guarantees that doing so will be without consequence.

The highest calling of a university is to craft a culture of open inquiry, one where both free speech and academic freedom are held as ideals. Protest is part of that culture, and the issue around which so many of the current demonstrations are centered — U.S. involvement in the Israel-Hamas conflict — ought to be fiercely and regularly debated on college campuses.

The Constitutional right to free speech is the protection against government interference restricting speech. Therefore, leaders at public universities, which are funded by government, have a heightened duty to respect those boundaries. Private institutions don't have the same legal obligations, but that doesn't relieve them of the responsibility to encourage open dialogue whenever and wherever possible on their campuses. It's essential to the pursuit of learning.

In the real world, though, this can get messy, and nuance is required when free speech comes into tension with protecting academic freedom. The earliest universities to adopt the principle of academic freedom did so to thwart interference and influence from totalitarian states and religious zealotry. Today, the American Association of University Professors defines it as "the freedom of a teacher or researcher in higher education to investigate and discuss the issues in his or her academic field, and to teach or publish findings without interference from political



figures, boards of trustees, donors or other entities."

Student codes of conduct and other guidelines are meant to relieve some of the tension between free speech and academic freedom, as well as to ensure that schools are in compliance with government regulations and laws. Every campus has them. But rules matter only when guardrails are consistently upheld. It's in that enforcement that the leadership of too many universities has fallen short.

The point of protest is to break such rules, of course, and to disrupt daily routines so profoundly as to grab on to the world's attention and sympathies. Campuses should be able to tolerate some degree of disruption, which is inherent to any protest. That makes it even more important that school administrators respond when the permissible limits for speech are violated.

During the current demonstrations, a lack of accountability has helped produce a crisis.

It has left some Jewish students feeling systematically harassed. It has deprived many students of access to parts of campus life. On campuses where in-person classes or commencement exercises were canceled, students have watched their basic expectations for a university experience evaporate. And at times, the protesters themselves have been directly endangered — the disarray and violence of the past weeks has been escalated by the continued involvement of both the police and external agitators.

Amid the protests, there has been much discussion of both antisemitism and Islamophobia, and when the line is crossed into hate speech. There are profound risks to imposing overly expansive definitions of inappropriate speech, and universities have been rightly chided for doing so in the past. But it should be easy to agree that no student, faculty member, administrator or university staff member on a campus should be threatened or intimidated. School policies should reflect that, and they should be enforced when necessary.

In the longer term, a lack of clarity around acceptable forms of expression, and a failure to hold those who break those norms to account, has opened up the pursuit of higher learning to the whims of those motivated by hypocrisy and cynicism.

For years, right-wing Republicans, at the federal and state level, have found opportunities to crusade against academic freedom, with charges of antisemitism on campus serving as the latest vehicle. Speaker Mike Johnson of the House of Representatives used this moment of chaos as cover to begin a legislative effort to crack down on elite universities, and lawmakers in the House recently passed a proposal that would impose egregious government restrictions on free speech. The Senate should reject those efforts unequivocally.

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WE INTERRUPT THIS EDITORIAL FOR AN ILLUSTRATIVE AD FOR YOU-CAN-GUESS-WHO:



Or direct to https://ia800307.us.archive.org/9/items/newsom-4-3-24-snow-survey/Trump%20ad%20on%20campus%20unrest%205-3-24.mp4.

WE NOW RETURN YOU TO YOUR EDITORIAL:

The absence of steady and principled leadership is what opened the campus gates to such cynicism in the first place. For several years, many university leaders have failed to act as their students and faculty have shown ever greater readiness to block an expanding range of views that they deem wrong or beyond the pale. Some scholars report that this has had a chilling effect on their work, making them less willing to participate in the academy or in the wider world of public discourse. The price of pushing boundaries, particularly with more conservative ideas, has become higher and higher.

Schools ought to be teaching their students that there is as much courage in listening as there is in speaking up. It has not gone unnoticed — on campuses but also by members of Congress and by the public writ large — that many of those who are now demanding the right to protest have previously sought to curtail the speech of those whom they declared hateful.

Establishing a culture of openness and free expression is crucial to the mission of educational institutions. That includes clear guardrails on conduct and enforcement of those guardrails, regardless of the speaker or the topic. Doing so would not only help restore order on college campuses today, but would also strengthen the cultural bedrock of higher education for generations to come.

Source: https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/11/opinion/campus-protests.html.

We are now in what we called in our earlier post a cooling off period between the last meeting of the Legislative Assembly and the next one. It's a time for reflection. Enough said.
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*https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2024/05/leaks-from-leg-assembly-meeting.html.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:31 AM No comments:  

Labels: politics, UCLA

UCLA to Pay $10 Million to Berkeley in Athletics Tax



From the San Francisco Chronicle:

University of California President Michael Drake is recommending that UCLA pay UC Berkeley $10 million a year through the 2029-30 school year to help Cal shore up its athletic department in the wake of the collapse of the Pac-12 conference.

The "Calimony" payments — which will be considered by the UC Board of Regents at its meeting next week at UC Merced — follow UCLA's divorce from the Pac-12 to join the Big Ten. The move accelerated the dissolution of the Pac-12 and UC Berkeley, along with Stanford, ultimately accepted an invitation to join the Atlantic Coast Conference...

Full story at https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/ucla-pay-uc-berkeley-10-million-calimony-19450025.php.

The detailed proposal for the Regents is at:

https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/may24/s2.pdf.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments: 

Labels: athletics, Drake, UC Regents, UC-Berkeley, UCLA

Saturday, May 11, 2024

Leaks from the Leg Assembly Meeting, Fairness, and the Long View

The Legislative Assembly met yesterday to discuss two forms of condemnation of the chancellor. The details of the meeting were supposed to be confidential and known only to the Zoom participants. You'll be **shocked, shocked**, to know there were leaks:

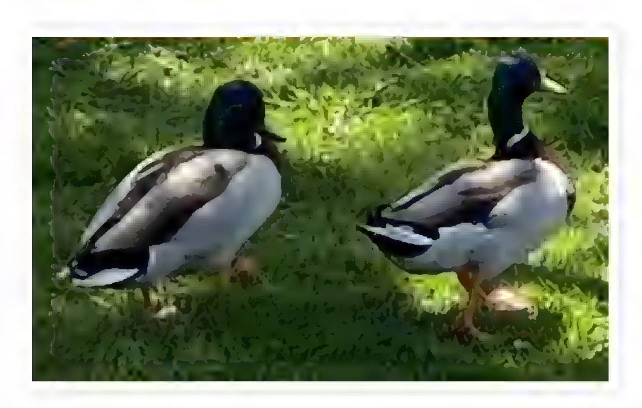
From the Bruin: *The UCLA Academic Senate will continue consideration of a vote to censure or a vote of no confidence in Chancellor Gene Block into its next meeting May 16 amid a lack of*



consensus from voting faculty...

At around 6:30 p.m. Friday, the legislative assembly adjourned its meeting with no official action in support of or against the vote of no confidence in Block, following a meeting that started around an hour late and extended over two hours past its original end time, according to three sources with knowledge of deliberations who were granted anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly on the matter. Some motions failed to meet the two-thirds threshold needed, including one motion to end debate for a vote and another motion to table consideration, according to the sources. The deliberations are not open to the public...

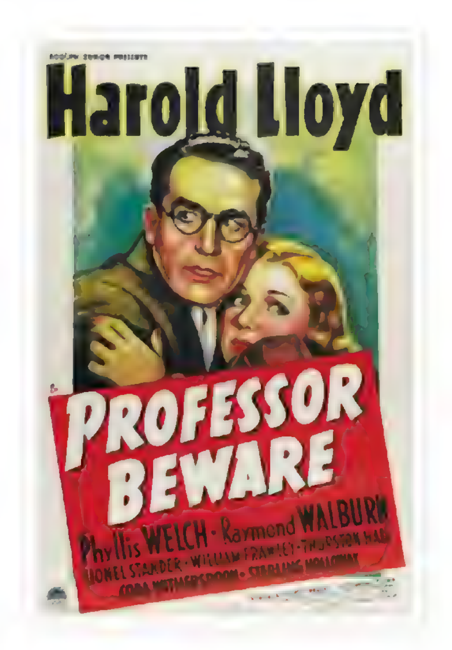
Full story at https://dailybruin.com/2024/05/10/ucla-academic-senate-continues-debate-on-gene-blocks-censure-no-confidence-votes.



Exactly what will happen on May 16th when the Leg Assembly meets again is unknown. But the delay does allow a **cooling-off period**, which is often a Good Thing. As yours truly has suggested in an earlier post, Chancellor Block would be well advised 1) to apologize for at least proctoring over decisions that led to last week's events and 2) to explain exactly how various decisions were made. In addition, the Legislative Assembly - which for all intents and purposes is running a quasi-trial - should invite the chancellor to mount a defense before taking any votes. Yes, technically it isn't a trial and the Leg Assembly isn't a court. But if it **quacks like a duck**...

There is also the external view. The chancellor will be up before a Congressional hearing on May 23rd, shortly after the next Leg Assembly meeting. Already, UCLA seems to have tied Columbia in national notoriety. So what happens at UCLA is not just a campus matter; there is a wide world beyond the bubble. The *de facto* cooling-off period is a time for thinking twice, and then doing it again - and again.

Yours truly has a sense that some of his colleagues have a kind of **lost youth syndrome**, recalling past episodes of campus unrest romantically, going back as far as the 1960s. So here is something to consider from the **long view**:



*More than 2,000 miles and two time zones separate Albuquerque, New Mexico, from Columbia University in New York. But given how closely **Mark Rudd** has been following the drama of recent weeks at his old alma mater, it might as well have been playing out in his own backyard. This retired community college teacher has an obvious and very personal interest in the pro-Palestinian protests at Columbia. In April 1968 – then a 20-year-old Jewish kid from New Jersey – he led the famous student revolt on campus that would become an iconic moment in the anti-Vietnam War protests.*

A leader of the Columbia chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, Rudd got kicked out of school in his junior year for all his troublemaking and would later join the Weather Underground – a revolutionary group committed to "the violent overthrow of the government of the United States in solidarity with the struggles of the people of the world." He himself went underground in 1970 after three of his fellow Weathermen were killed in an explosion in a New York townhouse while preparing bombs. Wanted on federal charges, he was on the lam for the next seven years...

While the student protests during his time at Columbia were for the most part nonviolent, Rudd notes, in several incidents students crossed the line. Not only did they regularly denounce the police as "pigs" (as some do now), but in a famous incident, a student jumping out of one of the occupied buildings on campus landed on a policeman's back, paralyzing him for life.

Malcolm X, the civil rights and Black empowerment leader known for demanding freedom and equality "by any means necessary" (a slogan that has come to dominate the current anti-Israel protests as well), was, according to Rudd, "like a God" for student protesters at Columbia in the 1960s. "I fell for all that stuff. I fell for Black Power. I fell for 'by any means necessary.' I wanted to express my moral outrage, and I went overboard," he reflects. "Eventually, I went way overboard with the whole Weatherman craziness." Watching the latest student protesters from afar, Rudd, 76, fears they are repeating his mistakes...

He also used to be a member of the local chapter of the anti-Zionist movement Jewish Voice for Peace, but "sort of dropped out."

"The reason I'm not that active anymore is that I can't stand a lot of my fellow Jews," he explains. "You know, like the story about the synagogue you wouldn't be found dead in? There are a lot of people in JVP who are traumatized by Israel, but it seems to me that they don't have any perspective. Like if I tell them that New Mexico is also a settler-colonial state, and the only difference between New Mexico and Israel is 100 years, they don't see the significance of that. "In fact, many of my comrades in JVP are so traumatized by Israel that they think it's uniquely

evil. But it's not. This is the world we live in and, unfortunately, mass murder, colonialism and genocide are extraordinarily common."

His one trip to Israel was in 2005, toward the end of the second intifada – an event that would further reinforce his commitment to nonviolence. "If you ask me, the second intifada was one of the stupidest things that ever happened," he says, noting how the Palestinian suicide bombings of the early 2000s caused large numbers of Israelis to question the viability of a land-for-peace deal. "And I would say the same thing about what Hamas did on October 7," he adds. "But you can't say anything like that to the kids at Columbia these days, because they're so hung up on their moral purity. And that's why they're not interested in getting any advice from people like me, especially not old people."

Full story from Haaretz at https://www.haaretz.com/us-news/2024-05-09/ty-article-magazine/.premium/mark-rudd-led-antiwar-students-in-68-he-says-todays-gaza-protests-repeat-his-mistakes/0000018f-57f8-dd02-adbf-77f910ac0000.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 9:03 AM No comments:   

Labels: Columbia, UCLA

Controller Numbers Through April



As a background to the state budget situation, we now have the estimates of the state controller for cash receipts to the general fund for the fiscal year through April. April is typically a big month for receipts because income taxes are due in the middle of the month.

The numbers available through April indicate a continued issue of overestimating receipts, particularly the receipts from the personal income tax.

The table below shows the overestimate relative to what was assumed in January 2024 when the governor made his initial budget proposal and last June when the current year's budget was enacted.

Cash Receipts Through April 2024, FY 2023-24

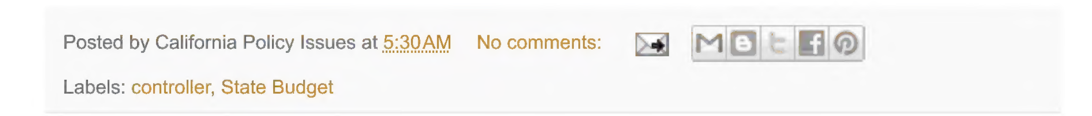
$ billion	Actual	Estimate Jan 2024	Estimate June 2023
Revenue	$162.7	$169.0	$200.5
	($6.3)		
		($37.8)	
Personal Income Tax	$100.3	$103.3	$127.8
	($3.7)		
		($27.5)	

Source: State Controller

As can be seen, much of the difference between the actuals and the estimates comes from the personal income tax.

The state still has a lot of cash on hand in various accounts, a total of $95.8 billion in unused borrowable resources. So it won't have a need to engage in external borrowing, as it has in prior budget crises.

Source: https://sco.ca.gov/Files-ARD/CASH/April2024StatementofGeneralFundCashReceiptsandDisbursements.pdf.



Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:30 AM No comments:

Labels: controller, State Budget

A New Prop 13?

The state Supreme Court is considering a challenge to allowing a ballot proposition regarding limitation of tax increases to be put on the November ballot. Sufficient signatures have already been submitted and the proposition will appear unless the Court blocks it on constitutional grounds.

It should be noted that courts have been reluctant to strike things from the ballot, since they might not pass anyway and there are other options if they do pass. In effecr, why do something controversial about an issue that might not arise at all if normal electoral procedures are allowed to occur?

From the San Francisco Chronicle: *The state Supreme Court seemed reluctant Wednesday to grant Democrats' request to remove from the November ballot a business-supported initiative that would require voter approval for any increase in state and local taxes or fees. But the*

justices appeared willing to put the tax-cut provisions on hold if the measure passes and then decide their legality.



The San Diego Union FINAL

PROP. 13 APPROVED BY WIDE MAJORITY

Younger Wins GOP Nomination

Younger's Strategy Pays Off

Court Test Looms On Tax Slash

November Ballot Poses Tough Fight For Brown

Carter Proposes Policy On Water

Curb Wins, Will Face Dymally

Index

How California Voted

As the hearing began, Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero asked a lawyer for Gov. Gavin Newsom and Legislative Democrats why the court should take the rare step of blocking the ballot measure "instead of allowing the voters to consider it."

Justice Joshua Groban asked a similar question, and Justice Martin Jenkins said less-drastic actions were available, like a freeze on provisions that would slash government revenue. Justice Leondra Kruger noted that the court usually considers a ballot measure's challenged sections individually rather than taking up the entire measure, and asked, "Why shouldn't we do so here?"

The measure "is already causing negative consequences," replied attorney Margaret Prinzing. "Governments up and down the state have to balance their budgets … without knowing what revenue is available to them" or whether they will need to ask their voters to approve every increase in taxes or fees.

But Sacramento attorney Thomas Hiltachk, the official proponent of the ballot measure, said its removal is being sought by "people in government who do not want change." If it passes in November, he told the court, any provisions subject to challenge could be reviewed separately, leaving the rest of the measure in effect.

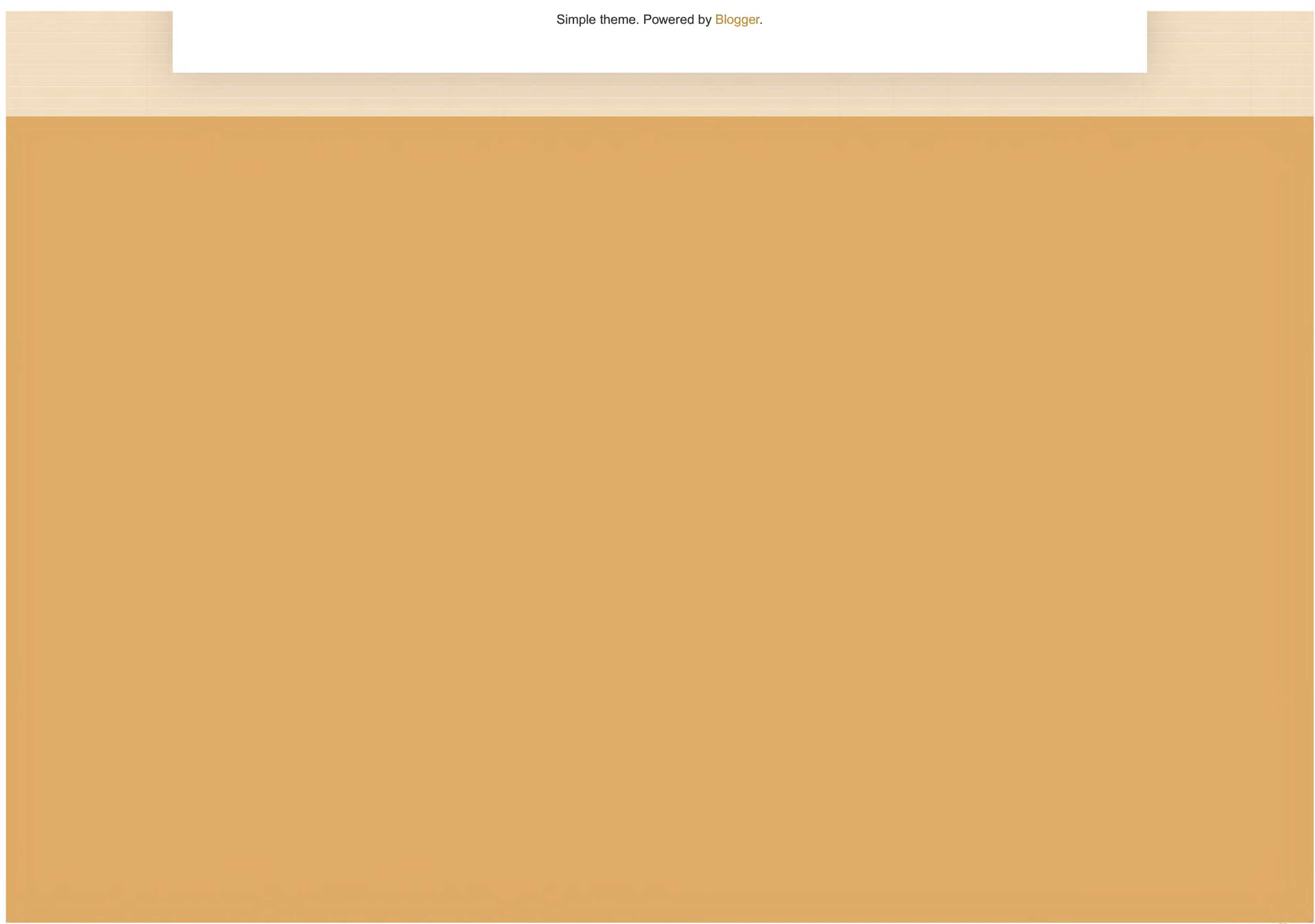
The Legislature now can increase state taxes by a two-thirds majority vote. The initiative would retain that standard but would also require a majority of California voters to approve the increase before it could take effect.

It would also require local voters to approve any increases in their taxes or licensing fees, with a two-thirds majority required to raise funds for specific programs. And it would apply retroactively to all taxes and fees since the start of 2022, canceling them unless approved within 12 months by the lawmakers and voters cited in the ballot measure...

Full story at https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/california-tax-ballot-19445263.php.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 5:00 AM No comments:

Labels: politics, State Budget


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